CT Baseball – Suggested Warm Up Routine – Games & Practices

Properly warming up your players before practices and games is an extremely important (and oftentimes overlooked) activity. An appropriate warm up will:

* Physically prepare the athlete by allowing their muscles to generate heat, become oxygenated and allow for a full range of motion and speed
* Decrease the chance of physical injury
* Mentally prepare the athlete for game play
* Provide game-like movements and repetitions to engrain good habits over a long period of time
* Allow for incorporation of fun activities to better engage young athletes

Dynamic warm ups should be done at moderate pace, work multiple muscle groups, and should last no more than 10-15 minutes. Warm ups should sequentially move from low intensity to high intensity/impact activities. Note that traditional static stretches have been found to have no effect or may hinder performance and injury prevention. Static stretches should be done after game play has ended.

The following is a recommended warm up routine for games and practices:

Start with all players on the foul line, and have them finish about 20 yards into the outfield

* High Knees – jog at a slow to moderate pace and bring their knees up as high as they can
* Butt Kickers – jog at a slow to moderate pace and bring their legs back to the point that their feet touch their glutes
* Band Leaders (aka Frankensteins) – take a step, extend their left leg straight out, and touch their toes with their right hand. Then alternate with their right leg and left hand.
* Knee hugs – take a few steps, grab their knee, and turn the leg/knee inwards while “hugging” the knee
* Inside Lunges – take a long step (lunge), then lean in and turn the torso inside of the knee
* Twist Lunges – take a long step (lunge), then twist the torso (alternate turning to left and right)
* Cariocas – Slide sidewards, alternating moving front foot forward and behind your body
* Shuffles – Slide sidewards
* Back Pedals – run backwards on the balls of your feet
* Sprints – 50%/75%/100%
* Arm Circles (forward and backward) – with arms straight out to the side, move arms in a circular motion
* Huggers – put arms straight out, then cross arms and reach behind to slap your shoulder (like a hug) alternating which arm is on top/bottom
* Flappers (left/right) – place arm in a bent 90 degree position, rotate forearm forwards and backwards

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4JIle7nXlPQ> (dynamic examples begin at 2 minute mark)

Throwing:

* Line up with half of the team on the foul line, with the other half lined up as partners about 5 feet apart. Drop gloves. Underhand toss the ball, catch with only your glove hand (older kids can move back more).
* Back up to about 10 feet – roll and field ground balls with perfect fielding position (no gloves)
* Put gloves on – Throwing player will place their glove hand on their throwing elbow. Flick the ball to their partner, emphasizing the four seam grip and putting spin on the ball
* Keep feet still, all toes facing directly at the partner. Rotate and throw normally without moving the lower half. Emphasis is on rotation and follow through.
* Rotate so front shoulder (glove hand) is facing their partner. Place hands in a big T position (emphasis on extension and reaching back), rotate and throw to their target
* Step back a few feet - Shuffle and throw normally – think “step to the ball with left, shuffle with right, throw with left” (backwards if they’re a lefty)
* Quick transfer – move in a few feet and focus on getting the ball out of the glove as quickly as possible. Make it a game – first partners to 50 or 100 catches wins!
* Pop flies – throw some pop flies to their partner
* Long Toss – Back up to about as far as the partners can complete a throw with 1 hop, work on crow hopping (step behind with plant foot) to generate velocity on the throws

Many of these drills can be found here:

* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=77r6mWAUecA>

Play a game (optional):

* Some examples are here - <https://wrssba.com/coaches/skills-and-drills/fun-drills-games/>

Swings (optional):

* Grab bats and have the players do some dry swings
* Have each player take 5-10 swings off the tee or soft toss. If available, they can also hit weighted sand balls in the outfield.